

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite, claims 1-4, 8-9, 11-14 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Shukuri et al., claims 5-6 and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukuri et al. in view of Veerasamy, claims 7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukuri et al. in view of Parker, and claims 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukuri et al. in view of Parker and Newby et al.

The gist of the present invention is to provide a method for fixing support means (spacer) into an evacuated glass panel. At first, a solution layer is applied on a surface of one planar glass sheet of the evacuated glass panel, then the support means are placed on the solution layer, and at last the upper surface of the support means is covered with the other planar glass sheet. The solution layer is finally heated to dry so as to fix the support means between the planar glass sheets. **It is important to note that the solution layer is not heated to dry until the other planar glass sheet is placed over the support means. As a result, the support means are not affixed firmly on the planar glass sheet during the manufacturing process.** In other words, the two ends of the support means can move freely in the evacuated glass panel and the support means are positioned and supported temporarily on the planar glass sheet by the immersion and tension of the solution layer.

Shukuri discloses a method for fixing the spacers distributed on the glass panel.

The method mixes and makes the low melting point glass and pine oil into a paste at first, then the paste is attached on one glass sheet to form paste-formed members. **The formed past-formed members are heated together with the glass sheet so as to form pre-spacer forming members by baking** (col. 11, line 1-45). In other words, the spacers made up of the low melting point glass are formed by sintering before the other glass sheet is placed. After these steps, the ends of the spacers (support means) are fixed and firmly attached on the one glass sheet and can no longer move freely.

Therefore, the difference between Claim 1 of the present invention and the art disclosed by Shukuri et al. is evident in that the support means of Claim 1 are not affixed firmly on one of the planar glass sheet during the manufacturing process and the solution is heated only after the other planar glass sheet has been placed. Shukuri et al., however, heat the paste first by sintering to form spacers firmly fixed on one of the glass sheet before the other planar glass sheet is placed together. The solution layer of Claim 1 can support and prevent the support means from moving at the following manufacture steps without having to sinter and firmly fix the support means. Cracks from excessive pressure are thus avoided for the manufactured evacuated glass panel of the invention. At the process of sealing the edge of the evacuated glass panel with high temperature, the solution layer volatilizes and only a little of the solution remains in the bottom of the support means.

In conclusion, Claim 1 of the present invention is novel compared to Shukuri et al. None of the arts disclosed by Veerasamy, Parker and Newby et al. disclose the instant invention as claimed in Claim 1. At the same time, the subject matter as claimed in Claim

1 of the present invention is not obvious to those skilled in the art. Applicants respectfully contend that Claim 1 is allowable over the cited prior arts under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a). By virtue of dependency, claims 2-18 should also be allowable.

The foregoing discussion has shown that the instant invention differs from the cited prior arts. The physical difference results in different effects and is not obvious. The above amendment also correct all the informalities and indefiniteness including those pointed out by the examiner to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112. The amended claims 1-18 are in full condition. The specification has been amended carefully to correct a few editorial and grammatical errors as well as some awkward languages to make it more readable. Prompt and favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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